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ABSTRACT

Designed to help implement the goals of the California state educational reform movement, this document presents a philosophical and practical framework for a literature based English language arts curriculum that will encourage students to read widely and in depth, write often in many formats, study important writings from many disciplines, and relate these studies meaningfully to their own lives. Chapter 1 describes the curriculum goals of preparing students to become informed citizens, effective workers and fulfilled individuals, and compares features in effective and ineffective language arts programs. Chapter 2 provides the rationale for basing the integrated instruction program in literature, using particular literary works, motivating reading through a variety of literatures, teaching composition skills through process writing experiences, and using various oral language activities to teach language skills. Chapter 3 discusses teaching methods and materials, including modeling, questioning, direct teaching, media and computer-assisted instruction, and multimodal approaches. Chapter 4 presents examples of integrated arts programs and lessons for grades kindergarten through three, three through six, six through nine, and nine through twelve. Chapter 5 describes and advocates over 20 alternative methods of student and program assessment. Chapter 6 identifies the roles of teachers, community, staff, and administration in revising this curriculum. Appendixes present: (1) textbook and instructional materials standards; and (2) a bibliography and recommended readings. (JG)

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English-*Language* Arts Framework

for California Public Schools Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve

Developed by the
English-Language Arts Curriculum Framework and Criteria Committee

Adopted by the
California State Board of Education

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Foreword

The goals of our educational reform movement are to prepare all students to function as informed and effective citizens in a democratic society, to function effectively in the world of work, and to realize personal fulfillment. The main features of an English–language arts curriculum that reinforces the goals of our reform movement include:

- A systematic literature program with a meaning-centered approach based on intensive reading, writing, speaking, and listening
- A clearly communicated sense of common values and common goals that respect diversity
- An emphasis on delight in the beauty and heritage of our language.

Revitalizing English–language arts instruction through a literature-based curriculum is a critical part of our overall educational reform movement.

Language is the medium of the mind. It forces us to find the words that most persuasively express our point of view and, in the process, forces us to clarify our point of view. Writing, in particular, exercises the intellect. The habit of good writing—the organizing of ideas, the marshaling of evidence, and the choosing of the most appropriate words to express an idea—is virtually indistinguishable from clear thinking.

To use language effectively, we must want to communicate, and we must be equally skilled in all aspects of language. To this end, English–language arts require the integration of all the elements of language—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In addition to improving students' language skills and their sensitivity

to language, integrating all the language arts can help students develop the type of thinking skills they need to become informed and effective citizens.

Language belongs to each of us. And we all use words to communicate and make our wishes, opinions, and feelings known to others. However, our skill with the language is directly related to the experiences we have had with words and to those who have modeled the language for us—parents, grandparents, teachers, friends, favorite authors. If we have had good models, that is readily apparent in what we write and what we say. I am very pleased with our new *English–Language Arts Framework* because it calls on teachers and students alike "to unlock the doors of language and to discover the best that human beings have thought, written, and spoken." Those are the doors that must be opened if we are to achieve the goals we have set for ourselves and our children.

This new *English–Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools,* which provides philosophical direction and perspectives on curriculum and instruction, can be an important resource for curriculum planners, decision makers, teachers, and parents to use in developing strong instructional programs. However, we must do more than adopt the framework. Only through our best efforts and sustained commitment will we truly achieve the level of excellence outlined in this document: the development of "informed and responsible citizens, competent and successful members of the work force, and thinking, fulfilled individuals within our society."

Bill Honig

Superintendent of Public Instruction

Preface

To prepare students for the twenty-first century and to lift public schooling above the level of mediocrity, we in the State Department of Education have made a commitment to work with educators at all levels to provide quality education for all our students. Reform efforts began with the enactment of Senate Bill 813, which mandated the development of model curriculum standards for grades nine through twelve in seven subject areas, including English–language arts. The development of the *Model Curriculum Standards, Grades Nine Through Twelve* was one of the first steps in the process of revitalizing the English–language arts curriculum. The process continues with the development of the *English–Language Arts Model Curriculum Guide, Kindergarten Through Grade Eight* and this framework, which provides the cornerstone for developing all future publications and training.

The work on developing this document, *English–Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve,* began in the spring, 1985, with Superintendent Bill Honig and the State Board of Education appointing leading English–language arts educators to serve on the English–Language Arts Curriculum Framework and Criteria Committee. The committee met numerous times as a group and as subcommittees during the 1985-86 school year. Drafts of the framework were reviewed and critiqued by committee members and educators at all levels during the 1986-87 school year.

We wish to pay special tribute to the committee members who worked many hours beyond their regular assignments—all without additional compensation. We are also grateful to the school districts that supported the participation of their staffs and schools in developing this document. And we acknowledge especially those

districts that were generous in granting release time for teachers to serve on the committee. We truly appreciate the dedication of the committee members, manuscript writers, and reviewers.

The *English–Language Arts Framework* is aligned with the other Department language arts publications, such as the *Model Curriculum Standards, Grades Nine Through Twelve* and the *English–Language Arts Model Curriculum Guide, Kindergarten Through Grade Eight,* which promote a systematic meaning-centered literature program for all students. Such a program will provide our future adults with (1) a solid body of knowledge derived from a common cultural heritage; (2) experience in confronting important human issues and conflicts; (3) a strong sense of values, including personal, social, and aesthetic values; and (4) the necessary language and thinking skills acquired through frequent and meaningful listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

In addition to serving as the basis for the education of teachers and administrators, the development of textbooks and instructional materials, and the evaluation of programs, the framework also has important implications for (1) the Legislature, which must provide funding for libraries, instructional materials, and staff development; (2) school districts as they revise their curricula, plan strategies for using categorical funds most effectively, and draw on their talents to serve the needs of all students; and (3) parents who, by being informed and by reading and writing themselves, can serve as models for their children.

In cooperation with school districts, offices of the county superintendents of schools, institutions of higher education, and professional associations, we have already initiated activities to implement the philosophy of the renewed curriculum through the California Reading Initiative. Conferences and workshops on the framework and its implementation are being conducted throughout the state. The English–Language Arts Curriculum Implementation Center is providing leadership in curriculum and teacher training, which are aligned with the goals of this framework. Projects, such as the California Literature Project through its summer institutes and follow-up activities, are assisting schools to implement the new literature-based curriculum. The California Writing Project, with its 19 statewide centers, is conducting staff development workshops for teachers to improve the teaching of writing. The Teacher Education and Computer Centers are providing much needed support in a variety of ways. We thank all those connected with these efforts. You are helping to make real the dream of giving all students a literature-based and integrated English–language arts program.

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1. Emphases of the Framework

We are in the midst of a revolution—a quiet, intellectual revolution spinning out dramatic insights into how the brain works, how we acquire language, and how we construct meaning in our lives. Psycholinguistics, language acquisition theory, and research in composition and literacy unite to present new challenges for students and teachers of English–language arts and to suggest the need for a fresh look at literature, the core of the discipline, and at strategies for teaching listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

At the same time that we find ourselves exploring how these exciting new discoveries about language and teaching must affect our classrooms, public education has become the focus of numerous studies. And these studies have created an unprecedented public awareness of the schools and new demands to provide for students the best that education can offer. The importance of English–language arts to the education of all students—indeed, to the survival of a democratic society itself—has been made clear in those studies. As suggested by Ernest L. Boyer in *High School: A Report on Secondary Education in America:*

> The first curriculum priority is language. Our use of complex symbols separates human beings from all other forms of life. Language provides the connecting tissue that binds society together, allowing us to express feelings and ideas, and powerfully influence the attitudes of others.[1]

The overarching goals of the English–language arts curriculum are:

- *To prepare all students to function as informed and effective citizens in our democratic society.* Language permits

[1]Ernest L. Boyer, *High School: A Report on Secondary Education in America.* New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., © 1983 by The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, p. 85.

The teachers of English-language arts must direct their students as they seek to unlock the doors of language and to discover the best that human beings have thought, written, and spoken.

people to gain access to the knowledge that makes us culturally literate, and one of the most important ingredients in becoming culturally literate is familiarity with significant works of literature in which the great themes, events, and ideals of the culture have been recorded.

- *To prepare all students to function effectively in the world of work.* In this age of technology, full participation in the work force requires effective language use. Effective language use is at the very core of lifelong learning strategies that will permit people to become versatile and to adapt to jobs in the twenty-first century which will require sophisticated technical, scientific, and managerial skills.
- *To prepare all students to realize personal fulfillment.* Effective language use also permits people to develop a full sense of themselves as individuals. Through the reading of Anne Frank's diary or the musings of a contemporary author, individuals find answers to their questions and experience a connection with the past and present. By being exposed to the greatest and most powerful literary works, people are given effective models for speaking and writing that enable them to express themselves as individuals within a culture.

These goals and what we know about how students learn and use language have important implications for how we develop curriculum, select textbooks, and plan programs and activities. The structuring of an English-language arts program around matters so intensely personal and human as expression and language cannot be limited to a daily list of ten or 15 skill objectives or to the completion of meaningless work sheets, sometimes called the dismal paperchase of childhood. Reading activities, rather than focusing only on identifying words, must help students become fluent in language as they expand their understanding of a text. Writing activities, rather than focusing on legibility or mechanics in isolation, must enable students to plan strategies for communicating their thoughts effectively according to their audience and purpose. Speaking and listening activities, rather than presuming that students are, in the words of Charles Dickens's Mr. Gradgrind, pitchers "to be filled so full of facts," must involve students actively as they describe their encounters with literature and composition and interactively as they communicate their understandings and insights to others.

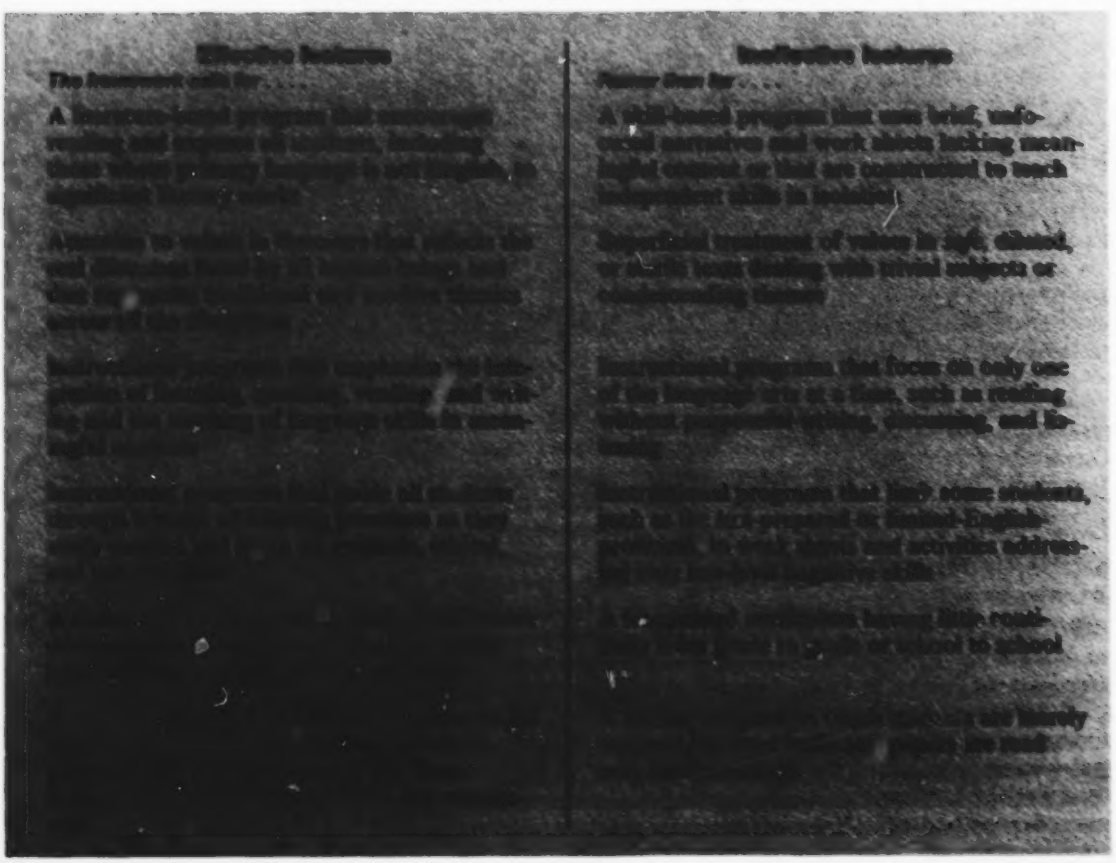
The content of the English-language arts curriculum must be challenging while teaching strategies must create situations that enable students to ask questions when they do not understand, to recognize when they have written unclearly and then to revise, and to draw on all their resources of speaking and listen-

ing, reading and writing, knowing when and why and how to use those skills effectively. The teachers of the English–language arts must direct their students as they seek to unlock the doors of language and to discover the best that human beings have thought, written, and spoken.

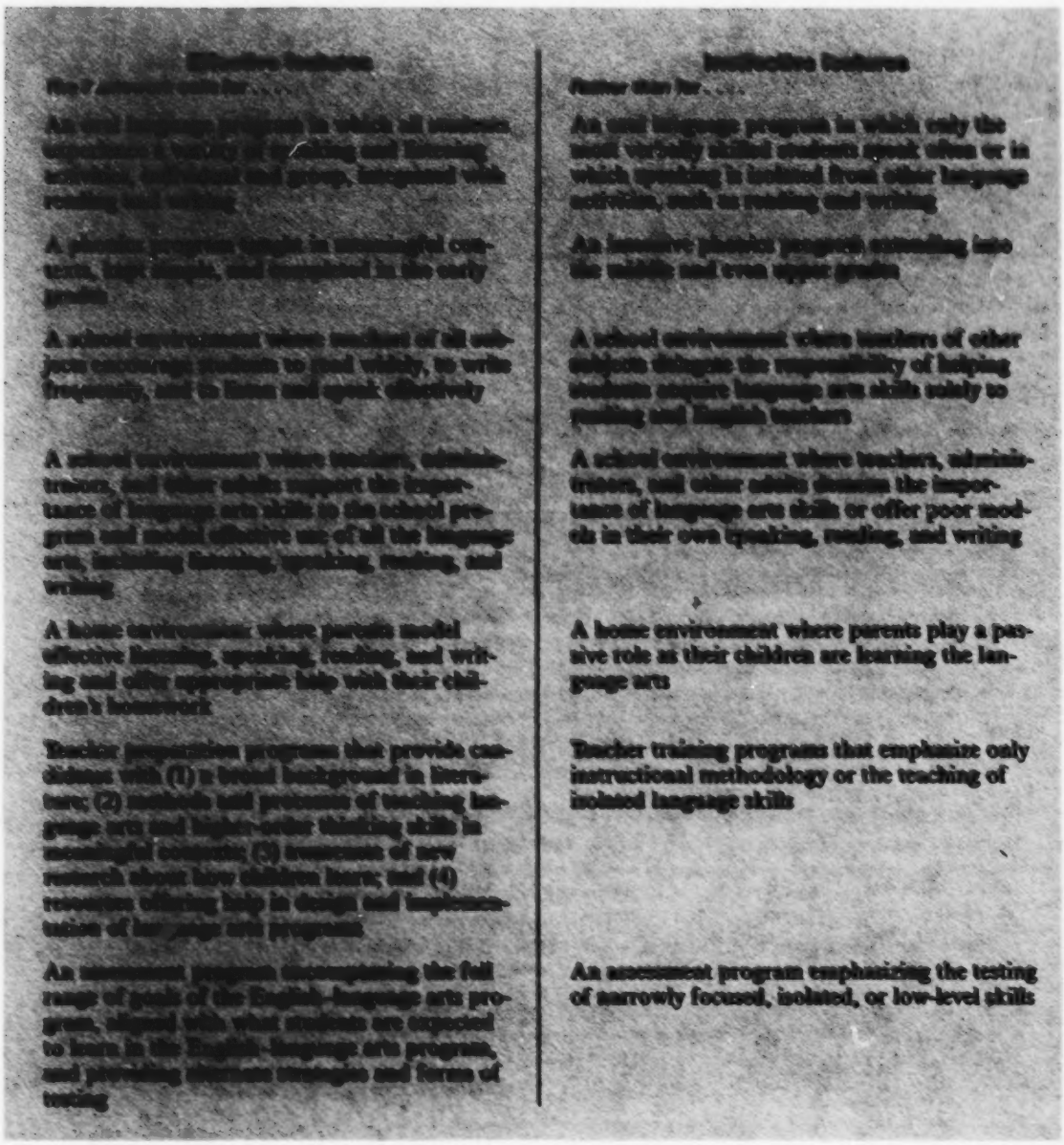
Recent studies tell us that we have become a nation with many adults who cannot read or will not read. Corporate managers say that a large percent of workers and professionals entering the work force are inadequately educated in essential reading and writing skills. Students often report being bored with schools, while teachers, beleaguered with large classes of disinterested students, often feel like menials and paper clerks, provided with little more than teacherproof materials and lock-step programs instead of challenged to give their best to teaching. Such grim scenarios clearly call for a reassessment of how we develop a literate and informed populace and a stimulating, lively school environment.

Given the goals, principles, and practices described in this *English–Language Arts Framework,* we can identify some general features that differentiate effective programs from those that are less effective (see the chart, "Comparison of Features in Effective and Ineffective English–Language Arts Programs").

Comparison of Features in Effective and Ineffective English–Language Arts Programs



Comparison of Features in Effective and Ineffective English–Language Arts Programs (continued)



In summary, the English–language arts curriculum must provide students, through their study and understanding of literature and their experiences in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, with a level of literacy and fluency that enables them to become informed and responsible citizens, competent and successful members of the work force, and thinking, fulfilled individuals within our society.

2. Essential Elements of English-Language Arts Programs

Language enables human beings to make sense of things. We filter a chaotic stream of images, sounds, and feelings through our words into manageable concepts and explanations. When the study of language ceases to help us understand ourselves and our world, and when language is fragmented or treated only in its disconnected forms, learning is lost to boredom, except perhaps to linguists or grammarians. As the young Helen Keller discovered the world outside her walled-in self when she connected the word *w-a-t-e-r* with that refreshing liquid pouring over her hands, so must students awaken to the magic of language if they are to learn.

While in the past we may have been tempted to reduce knowledge to microbits and see education as the learning of parts, current studies have taught us much about how goal-oriented language use is. We know that human beings use language in these ways:

1. Constructively, when they create new meaning by integrating new knowledge with old
2. Actively, when they become involved with learning enough to relate it to their own goals and purposes
3. Interactively, when they communicate what they learn to others
4. Strategically, when they plan language to suit their purposes and perform a task effectively
5. Fluently, when they approach each new reading and writing task easily and confidently.[1]

[1]Adapted from *Becoming a Nation of Readers: The Report of the Commission on Reading*. Prepared by Richard C. Anderson and others. Washington, D.C.: The National Institute of Education, U.S. Department of Education, 1984, pp. 7—18.

Most important, we know that for learning to occur, students' use of language must be both motivated and integrated. To use language effectively, human beings must want to communicate, and they must be equally skilled both in listening and speaking and in reading and writing in order to open all the possibilities of learning.

Integrating Instruction in the Language Arts

As the human mind seeks unity among the parts for a wholeness of understanding, so do the English–language arts require integrating all the elements of language before students can make sense of the processes of thinking, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In-depth learning of any kind presumes various levels of effort and involvement of all the human senses and faculties. For example, when discussion precedes the reading of a selection, the reading becomes easier, and ideas become more accessible to the reader. Similarly, when discussion precedes a writing assignment, the quality of writing improves. When a writing assignment follows the reading of a selection, students remember key ideas of a story more easily, more fully, and longer. In addition to improving their language facility and their sensitivity to the art in language, such integration of all the acts of language moves students more readily towards those higher-order thinking skills they must develop in order to become thinking human beings: to think critically and to develop skills in solving problems and making decisions. This can be accomplished by using literature, both fiction and nonfiction, to enable students to bring meaning into their own lives.

Establishing a Literature-Based Program

If the end of English–language arts programs is developing a literate, thinking society, then surely the means to that end must be devising for students meaningful encounters with the most effective sources of human expression. In its capacity to move the human spirit in any age, to involve students

To touch students' lives and to stimulate their minds and hearts, we need a literature-based English–language arts curriculum that engages students with the vitality of ideas and values greater than those of the marketplace or the video arcade.

and motivate learning with its appeal to universal feelings and needs, and to elevate common experiences to uncommon meaning, the language of great, classic literature speaks most eloquently to readers and writers.

The uniqueness of the American promise lies in its openness of speech and thought, its fundamental affirmation of freshness and change, and its willingness to adopt the newcomer and adapt his or her special contributions to the fabric of the whole. While our culture admires the practical problem-solving of a Henry Ford, it also reveres the eloquence and intellectual wisdom of a Thomas Jefferson and the articulate utterances and moral conviction of a Martin Luther King, Jr.

To touch students' lives and to stimulate their minds and hearts, we need a literature-based English–language arts curriculum that engages students with the vitality of ideas and values greater than those of the marketplace or the video arcade.

As we move further into an era in which far more information is available than we can absorb, where more time is spent in leisure than in work, the importance of literature in our lives increases. Literature reminds us of the best in the human character, the most admirable in human values, and the most articulate in human speech, whether those thoughts and feelings come from ancient Greece or modern Japan, from Puritan New England or tribal Africa, or from Renaissance England or contemporary Mexico.

A literature-based English–language arts curriculum provides students three important approaches to discovering the meaning of human experience through the language of literature:

- An in-depth study of core literary works, those substantive readings which speak to important questions and values all of us in a community must address
- Reading of literature that extends the study of the core work, captures students' individual interests, and challenges them to explore new avenues on their own
- Recreational-motivational reading that is based on students' natural curiosity and that encourages them to read for pleasure

Using Core Literary Works

The core literary works identified by a school or district offer all students a common cultural background from which they can learn about their humanity, their values, and their society. As students study such works as the *Odyssey* and the Book of Job and the writings of such authors as William Shakespeare, Aesop, and Hans Christian Andersen, the rich fabric of the society in which we live comes alive because the insights of great writers into the human condition transcend the limits of centuries and continents.

Beyond speaking to the universal stories and feelings all of us share, great literature enables teachers and students to explore and learn from the differences among cultures and times. A student raised to appreciate deference and community is no less baffled by Huck Finn's defiance of authority and independence than a student is who struggles to understand the concept of "face" and dignity, a notion which certainly would have helped Huck appreciate Jim's worth more quickly. Some students may need help understanding feminist stories; other students may need help comprehending the value of seeing many perspectives in a story from India.

To capture the breadth of human experience, a strong literature program offers the language and literature of many nations and perspectives; of racially and ethnically and culturally diverse societies; and of poems and narrations, fables and legends, and stories and plays. With a rich and diverse background in literature, students can begin to discover both the remarkable wholeness in the intricately woven tapestry of American society and the unique variety brought by many cultures to that intriguing fabric.

Recommending Extended Works

From the common background of core works that speak to all of us in the American society, students can move outward in their learning and, thus, extend their reading on their own, to books recommended by teachers and librarians—books that satisfy their individual curiosity, pique their interest, and address their needs and talents. While some students may be eager to read more works by a writer who tickled their fancy—an A. A. Milne or C. S. Lewis, a Jane Austen or Madeleine L'Engle—other students whose skills are less developed may be encouraged to read by finding books that they find manageable and interesting. Extended reading programs also enable students to maintain their reading skills through vacation periods and to fill hours they might otherwise find dull when they tire of video games or television game shows.

Using Recreational-Motivational Reading

As important as core and extended reading programs is a recreational-motivational reading program that takes advantage of students' natural curiosity to explore new avenues of interest and to develop lifetime reading habits. Classrooms, libraries, and homes, then, must become places where books containing the best and most powerful stories are accessible and abundant.

Supported by school, classroom, public, and home libraries full of literature in paperback and good magazines and reference books, teachers, librarians, and other adults ensure that students have access to plentiful reading materials before, during, and after school. Multiple copies of a good book enable students and teachers to share enjoyment of a story or novel while continuously expanding library collections entice students to read more.

Print media, such as newspapers and periodicals, and electronic media, such as video cassettes and computers, offer resources to lure even reluctant readers to become involved with language and learning. This is true whether the task is reading a driver's manual or cookbook, a career file or job application, a classic or a vision of the future. For example, by reading *The Wind in the Willows, The Velveteen Rabbit, The Little Prince, The Prince and the Pauper, The Secret Garden,* and *The Invisible Man,* students can discover the magic of language that transports them beyond today into the past and future, beyond their homes and schools

With a rich and diverse background in literature, students can begin to discover both the remarkable wholeness in the intricately woven tapestry of American society and the unique variety brought by many cultures to that intriguing fabric.

to anywhere in the world or the solar system, and beyond the ordinary to the extraordinary world of imaginative human experience in good literature. In a world full of language experiences and opportunities, students must inevitably discover the limitless possibilities of learning as they explore the world of books and print and other language media.

Learning to Read by Reading

"Children learn to read by reading, and the sensible teacher makes reading easy and interesting, not difficult and boring," said Frank Smith in *Essays into Literacy*. Mr. Smith suggests that learning to read by reading is all the student needs. He said, "Learning to read is a complex and delicate task in which almost all the rules, all the cues, and all the feedback can be obtained only through the act of reading itself." [2]

Although students in the early grades must be taught to identify individual words by sounding them out and using context clues, the most effective teaching techniques help students get to sense quickly, often leaving the more difficult task of learning individual words until after students have experienced the delight of understanding meaning in sentences. That most well-known of children's writers, Dr. Seuss, suggests why his books might be seen as models of a new reading curriculum, noting his greatest satisfaction in life: "I think I had something to do with kicking Dick and Jane out of the school system. I think I proved to a number of million kids that reading is not a disagreeable task. And without talking about teaching, I think I have helped kids laugh in schools as well as at home." [3]

In learning to read, students will discover, even in their beginning readers, the rich variety of literature in children's classics, folk and fairy tales, and meaningful modern stories. Basal readers will include these materials and can become organizing and teaching tools to help teachers and students deepen their understanding of the literature through the quality of the oral and written tasks suggested. Students, too, can create books they read and share with each other. They can bring their own experiences, intentions, and purposes to reading and writing tasks, rather than struggling with kits of fragmented materials and bland stories dulled and adapted by excessive use of readability formulas and controlled vocabularies.

Because of their encounters with street signs and library books, stories of Madeline, Babar, and Peter Rabbit, and their families' memories, students bring experiences to school that words can only symbolize. Although cultural differences may affect the inferences they make as they read, their language differences need not limit reading performance. Though some students may need more help than others in using contextual or textual clues in reading, all students need background information, vocabulary work, and help in working through a text as they move from words to meaning and from understanding a text to discovery and learning its implications for their lives.

Helping Students Develop Composition Skills

As students learn speech by generating and later imitating sounds, they also learn writing even before they go to school when they scribble lines imitating the direction and shapes of symbols they see around them, whether Chinese ideograms, Hebrew boxes and circles, or English slants and ripples. Childish letters quickly become recognizable and handwriting develops, and students learn to connect meaning with writing. From the creation of the first picture signed with a name or the first handwritten valentine, students begin the discovery of how important writing is to their sense of themselves and their need to communicate with others. As they develop confidence and fluency in the early grades,

[2]Frank Smith, *Essays into Literacy*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann Educational Books, Inc., 1983, p. 23.

[3]Dr. Seuss, *Los Angeles Times Magazine*, May 25, 1986, p. 40.

they discover, too, the importance of writing to learning.

Just as they learn to ride a bicycle by doing the riding or to read by reading, students in all grade levels learn to write by writing. In effective English–language arts programs, teachers integrate writing activities with listening, speaking, and reading, and they offer students frequent practice in writing about a wide range of subjects—from their own experiences and from literature and for a variety of audiences and purposes, real and imaginary. Daily experiences with journals or writing logs enable students to become fluent and confident about writing while they also learn to write for real audiences and meaningful purposes by, for example, communicating with other classes or school officials or writing letters to local newspapers or politicians.

Students who learn to write memorandums, to record history, to keep a diary, or to write a review of a concert or a film soon discover how to manipulate language to suit their meaning and purpose. At the same time, students exploring the possibilities of writing learn much about the process and the art of writing by talking and listening and by having frequent opportunities to respond to their own and to their classmates' writing.

In their earliest encounter with writing instruction, students must develop their skills with all the stages of the writing process. Prewriting activities enable students to gather ideas and materials for writing, to reflect on experiences and reading, and to discuss and argue and interact before they begin the complex act of writing. Writing the early drafts, knowing that these are only the beginning stages of the act of writing, enables students to develop fluency with language and to try out their words and meaning on others. Activities that allow students to respond to their own and others' writing develop their capacity to revise—literally, to *re-see*, to clarify, and to rearrange—and their capacity to explore their audience's response and their own new insights as they work toward a more finished version.

Students also must experience the act of editing, that stage of writing in which they learn to attend to the conventions of language—grammar, usage, spelling, punctuation, diction, syntax, and style—needed to clarify for readers what may already be clear for the writer. Students also learn to polish, revise, and improve their writing by learning to evaluate what they write, whether those evaluations occur informally as the work is in

The relationship between writing and human thought, basic to all the disciplines, becomes the province of all teachers, who become helpers in the teaching of writing across the disciplines.

its developmental stages or more formally as the piece is *finished.*

Finally, students must develop a sense that something happens after writing—that writing is published or posted for reading and that writing can be mailed or illustrated. Students must also learn that the act of meaningful writing goes beyond the assigning of a letter grade by a teacher, and they must learn that the art and skill attempted in one written assignment have a connection to the next.

The appropriate beginning and end of writing instruction is to develop in students the sense that they are writers, that they can use words and sentences and paragraphs to affect an audience, to express a thought or an opinion, and to make their experience vivid and memorable to someone else. Writing instruction, activities, and assignments, then, must help students move smoothly and easily from a focus at first on content, or what the writer means to say, to attention at the last to correctness, or how the writer must express his or her meaning in order to communicate effectively. Having developed confidence and fluency through frequent practice, having learned how to approach a variety of composing tasks from prewriting through evaluation, having discovered a sense of their own style and voice and power through writing, students can avoid plagiarism or developing a formal, phony prose that obscures meaning.

The usefulness of writing extends beyond the creative act of composing and expressing one's thoughts to the exploration of learning itself. Written passages are the greatest system yet devised for the storage and retrieval of information. They open to young learners the worlds of history and science, arts and vocations, psychology and philosophy, and mathematics and geography. The relationship between writing and human thought, basic to all the disciplines, becomes the province of all teachers, who become helpers in the teaching of writing across the disciplines. As students develop, pen and pencil and computer enable them to integrate whatever they are learning into what they already know and to make it their own. English–language arts teachers, supported by teachers in other disciplines who understand the importance of writing to learning, thus prepare students to use writing effectively to understand themselves and their world and to enter a society where understanding language and communicating are essential to work and leisure.

Developing Oral Language Skills

For many people, a world without sound is an even more frightening and isolating prospect than existence without sight. From the time when we first imitate speech, oral language is perhaps our most pervasive means of learning about the world we live in, once we move beyond the most elementary instincts and perceptions of the senses. From students' first attempts to string names of things and actions together and create meaning to the worldwide communications networks that bring newscasts into our living rooms from Cameroon and China, we begin to realize the importance of oral language in defining our lives and enabling us to participate in the community of human beings. Through effective English–language arts programs, we must offer students multiple opportunities, formal and informal, to develop their speaking and listening skills because talking and listening are the primary tools by which they will learn from today and the past and communicate with each other.

From the tribal oral histories of Africa to the classic tales from Greece and from the yarns about Paul Bunyan to the legends of the Celts, or the American Indian, human beings have been lovers of storytelling. More important, perhaps, students who have read a good book, a great story, or a moving poem want to talk about it, to explore their responses to the story, and to connect it to their experiences. Classroom activities that enable students to become Huckleberry Finn or King Arthur in a dramatization, to interview Scarlett O'Hara or Winnie the Pooh, and to share opinions in a discussion of Romeo's impulsiveness or Huck's wisdom offer students the chance to express their thoughts, to define and reflect on them, to challenge each other's opinions, and to explore a new meaning dis-

covered in a text. Whether students are *selling* books to each other in a sales talk or commercial, introducing important background information through drama or panel discussion, or responding to and investigating a text by talking about it with other students, oral language is at the heart of a literature program in the classroom. Oral language activities bring both delight to the class and involvement to the presenter far more vividly than is possible when students are silent and passive listeners whose only activity is to absorb, rather like a sponge.

Oral language activities that enable students to be involved in their learning of the English–language arts occur both informally and formally. Informal classroom role-playing encourages students to think quickly and critically about literary characters, important social issues, or real problems facing people today or yesterday. Informal discussions help students learn to listen attentively to what others are saying, to evaluate and respond, and to incorporate what they hear into their own thinking and responding. Discussions between partners or in small groups help students learn to state opinions honestly, precisely, and tactfully to discover multiple viewpoints on a difficult issue and to negotiate and find common ground. More formal speeches allow students to experience the value of preparation, through interviews or reading; of practice and timing; of persuasion, through assessment of purpose and audience; and of effective use of delivery in eye contact, diction, and voice control.

It is important that all students develop proficiency in standard English. Although many students come from uniquely rich cultures and speak a language that is linguistically different from standard English, the school setting and that of the larger society, including the economic and commercial communities, represent another linguistic sphere in which students must learn to move and speak.

With a variety of oral language experiences based on the vast resources of literature and the arts, sciences, or social sciences, students who have been involved in their own learning through listening, speaking, reading, and writing will enter a society prepared for the kind of cooperative work needed in the adult world today, a world where intellectual negotiation is essential to corporate, social, and political problem-solving. Their experiences in role-playing, leadership, and decision making—for example, when they plan classroom publications cooperatively, dramatize reactions to a novel, or engage in formal speaking situations—provide models for comparable roles in their lives.

3. Effective Instruction in English-Language Arts

Perhaps no other field of study demands of a teacher so much sensitivity, insight, and creativity as does English–language arts. In addition to being knowledgeable of literature and the broad subject matter of the English–language arts, from oral language to composition, teachers must (1) be able to excite students about learning to listen, speak, read, and write; (2) incorporate knowledge about language acquisition and learning in their instruction; and (3) be flexible in the use of methods and in attitudes. In this way the diverse needs of students will be met as the students grow in their use of language. The most important key to a successful program is a motivated and knowledgeable teacher who finds ways to lead students to love reading and to be effective language users. To involve and stimulate the dozens of personalities, backgrounds, talents, and interests of their students and to promote learning, English–language arts teachers must draw on all the resources available—from their own knowledge of the world and of good teaching to the instructional methods and tools available in today's fast-moving, technologically oriented environment.

To teach an integrated English–language arts program effectively, teachers must enable students to understand the meaning of the listening, speaking, reading, and writing tasks they encounter. Unlike early motor behavior, in which sitting precedes crawling and progresses sequentially to standing and walking and dancing, language use from its beginning requires a sense of wholeness and meaning, a sensitivity to the interconnectedness of parts rather than an isolation of elements and fragments. Students who become turned off from reading and writing often see no importance to

their lives of the reading and writing tasks they attempt. In contrast, those who are involved and active in their learning of reading, speaking, writing, and listening find ideas and meaning and importance in what they are doing. The activities and the learning make sense.

Moreover, the cultural and linguistic diversity of today's schoolchildren presupposes a need for universally meaningful materials and activities at the core of the English–language arts program. The activities and processes involved in reading good literature, writing about important ideas, and discussing topics which have meaning to their lives help all students, regardless of their heritage or language skills. They are helped to understand themselves, their world, and their relationship to society. Teaching strategies that allow students to take active roles in their learning, share ideas with partners and groups, ask questions about what they want to know as well as about what the teacher intends, and write and discuss and make presentations for the class develop in students the skills they must take with them from school into the rest of their lives. It is no small wonder, then, that teaching the English–language arts becomes an art in itself.

Modeling of English–Language Arts

A young child who imitates a parent's stance or the handling of a baby or the use of a hammer already demonstrates the importance of modeling to growth and learning. If the most expeditious teachers of practical lessons are experience and one's own discovery, the most effective teachers of those subtle, important lessons we call values are the models we learn to admire. The process begins with childish awe for parents and teachers and continues into adult reverence for the great people who surpass our more ordinary expectations for ourselves. Teachers who love literature communicate that enthusiasm to their students when they read and share their excitement about a story or an author with their students; those teachers know that the best way to teach and encourage reading is to model reading. "The best way to model reading for students—in grade one, grade six, or grade twelve—is to read to them."[1]

A teacher whose resonant voice and eloquent statement generate attention and interest in students, who lets them hear the voice of Romeo doting on Juliet's cheek or of Maya Angelou, who knows "why the caged bird sings," also encourages them to use words well and to speak effectively. Teachers who write, modeling the progress from creative chaos to impressive product in the classroom, allow students to see writing as natural and view its sometimes disorganized or messy processes without alarm. Teachers who remind themselves as they write about the struggles and pleasures of writing enable students to see the process from beginning to end, from articulation to response to revision, and to grow past frustration to encouragement and success. Teachers who listen well to students, valuing their ideas and encouraging them to ask questions, model the importance of good listening in life and develop good listening skills among their students.

The importance of good interactions with adults in developing language also extends far beyond classroom teachers and their students. A schoolwide program of sustained silent reading within the school day develops in students the habit of independent reading so important to their growth in reading skills and their commitment to lifetime reading. During this period of time, everyone at school is reading, whether for learning, for interest, or for pleasure. In addition, teachers and school officials who model good writing and speaking in their announcements, in school newspapers, or in classroom communications develop among students a respect for language and its power when used effectively. Schoolwide forums that recognize student achievement and performance in writing or speaking, whether in journals or debates, letters or

[1]Maryann Gatheral, "Reading Aloud to Kids in All Grades IS a Must," *Learning, the Magazine for Creative Teaching*. Belmont, Calif.: Pitman Learning, Inc., 1981.

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plays, essays or biographies, promote among students a sense of accomplishment and of the importance of language to the school community.

The Art of Questioning

Parents who have enjoyed or endured the "Why is?" stage of their children's development know how important questions are to learning. The fact that children's curiosity leads them to ask so many questions as they discover the world around them testifies to the enormous capacity of the mind and potential of language to articulate thoughts and communicate information and feelings. Students and teachers of the English-language arts can almost define the quality of the learning by the quality of questions raised in the classroom.

The substance of the learning experience is the perception of the learner about the subject. Questions make it possible for students to focus their attention and to ask more and deeper questions and for teachers to understand where students' information and needs are and to encourage students to ask more questions and make the learning their own. Teachers who develop a classroom atmosphere in which students know that learning is important prevent students from feeling threatened, inadequate, or alienated. Students who are asked open-ended questions and invited to explore many possible answers rather than hunt for the teacher's "right" one discover that real learning takes place because of their own understanding of what the ideas and answers and issues mean to them. Most important, students who articulate and communicate their questions about a work of literature, a piece of writing, or a classroom dramatic presentation move more easily to higher levels of expression and thought.

Teaching students to understand meaning in a work of literature or a piece of writing begins with questions to determine comprehension: Who? What? What happened? More important, however, is whether students learn to ask higher-order questions, those demanding that they reflect on inferences, apply understandings to new tasks, explore open-ended issues, analyze, evaluate, and draw conclusions. From a knowledge of what happened in an important work or event, students can learn to ask about causes and effects, about why things happened as they did, about what are possible solutions to a problem, and about how the events of a story or a real situation affect our lives, cause us to change, direct us to new discoveries, or challenge us to

understand meaning. Only when students can ask the important questions and explore new learning have we helped them understand why literature and language are worth the effort and are important to us as human beings.

Direct Teaching of Learning Strategies

Recent research indicates that students benefit from instruction that makes explicit the strategies being used to promote comprehension in reading, composition in writing, and clarity in speaking. The climate is right for growth when the learner becomes the center of learning rather than the teacher and when the thinker discovers that "thinking needs to be made public!" (i.e., when the teacher explicitly teaches strategies for synthesizing and integrating information, and students are not left guessing as to how to comprehend ideas) (cited in *Becoming a Nation of Readers*, p. 72).[2]

[2]See S. G. Paris, "Teaching Children to Guide Their Reading and Learning," in *Contexts of Literacy*. Edited by T. E. Raphael and R. Reynolds. White Plains, N.Y.: Longman, Inc. (in press).

The art of teaching, then, lies in helping students discover how good listeners, speakers, readers, and writers accomplish their ends in communicating with others. How do writers focus ideas, provide sufficient evidence, develop a piece of writing from thought to revision, and use others' responses to refine their words and thoughts? How do speakers persuade an audience to reason with them? How do thinkers arrive at conclusions, recognize strong or weak evidence, discard irrelevant material or expand inadequate statements, discover underlying assumptions about propositions, or uncover the deep-rooted values that support or undermine diverse opinions? How do the good readers paraphrase, develop images as they read, relate reading to their own lives and experiences, and develop a dialogue with the writer?

In addition, good teaching requires adapting the direct teaching of strategies to students' particular needs. Average or above-average students may learn easily from indirect methods. But less-prepared students or those with special needs or learning problems may require more explicit information about how to monitor their own learning, how to ask questions, how to detect statements and

The art of teaching, then, lies in helping students discover how good listeners, speakers, readers, and writers accomplish their ends in communicating with others.

inferences, how to listen effectively, how to speak clearly, and how to generate and develop ideas in writing.

Reading Great Literature

In an age in which electronic media enable us to flash images around the globe within seconds and where many children's earliest images are those of Saturday morning cartoons, it should not surprise us that today's students are tempted to describe great literature as "recognizable as such through bulk, hard words, long stretches of boredom."[3] The challenge for the English-language arts teacher, clearly, becomes enticing readers with such biases and background to discover the excitement of the revolution in *A Tale of Two Cities*, the humor in Shakespeare's comedies, and the artistry in *The Great Gatsby*. Or readers can delight in knowing that they can get through the bulk, understand the hard words, overcome the difficulties of style, and appreciate an important work for its thought, its imagination, and its statement about the human condition. If the gold is hard to mine, it is no less there.

Some books, such as those with interesting and predictable language and story patterns, hook readers instantly, drawing them into the scene easily. With other books, though, students need help to get into and through the work, focus on central issues, interpret symbols, discuss meaning, and argue interpretations. Presenting an oral reading of a lively scene, showing a film, preparing students' minds by asking questions related to students' experiences that the work will touch on, discussing difficult vocabulary, having students do free writing in journals or keep logs about a quotation or problem—all these strategies enable students to approach a text well. When the study of a work is followed by written and oral activities that allow students to pull their thoughts together, reflect on how the work relates to them and to their society, discuss or dramatize, and write or think, students are able to go beyond the encounter with a work and grasp what it means.

An effective English-language arts program introduces students to literature representing many perspectives, diverse styles and cultures and points of view, classic and contemporary attitudes, and a range of modes from fiction and drama through poetry and essay and speeches. It prepares them for understanding ideas and expressing themselves effectively about important human issues.

Direct teaching of literature helps students move into, through, and beyond the literary work to a new understanding of themselves and the world around them. Teachers who evoke a desire to read the literature by asking provocative questions, providing interesting background information, or structuring oral activities enable students to explore the work in depth, ask the important questions and explore the possibilities for learning in the work, and connect the meaning of the work to the world and their own lives.

Developing Composition Skills

The world of work and academia demand of students many forms and types of communication. While academic writing may demand the most formal use of exposition, the ability to use those skills of summarizing, analyzing, comparing and contrasting, describing, classifying, or persuading are important in far wider contexts than the college or graduate school experience. The teaching of composing skills and strategies in the schools prepares students both for communicating effectively and for developing their thinking as informed, aware employees and citizens.

Students need help from their earliest attempts to generate and develop ideas, to learn to organize details and give evidence, and to connect ideas and paragraphs so that the message arrives as clearly and coherently as intended. English-language arts programs should help students discover what they have to say, how they can draw on their experiences and their reading to clarify their meaning, what their words say to a listener or reader, and how they can edit for clarity.

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[3]Anthony Burgess, *Re Joyce*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1968, p. 18.

Effective instruction will enable them to use the writing process for their own purposes, attack a new writing problem confidently, and succeed in communicating with others.

Students are led by significant and meaningful assignments and direct teaching to approach a writing task that will lead to better writing and more critical thinking about themselves and the human condition. This approach is appropriate whether they are third graders who describe a hamster's behavior, sixth graders who summarize for the class biographies that each has read, ninth graders who analyze the difference between the book *Sounder* and the film, or twelfth graders who explain a thematic connection betrween *The Scarlet Letter* and *Go Tell It on the Mountain.*

Developing Oral Language Skills

After physical expressions and movements, the earliest human mode of communication is speech. Young children must be helped early to speak confidently so that they can be heard, whether they are reading a story or participating in a "show-and-tell" session. Older students, too, need direct teaching in the strategies of how to speak effectively: how to begin and summarize; how to prepare and organize; and how to consider the effect of delivery, gesture, voice quality, pace, and reasoning on an audience. Even discussion skills become matters for direct instruction as students learn how to respond to each others' insights and observations, how to listen attentively, how to rephrase and clarify a point, and how to disagree tactfully.

Oral reading, too, requires direct instruction in the art of reading with meaning and expression and appropriate volume and pace to make the reading understandable to an audience. If students are to learn the power of speech and to understand the need to speak effectively in the classroom and the workplace, they must have experience in developing the art and skill of effective speech as an integral part of their school experiences and study the most eloquent, articulate, and persuasive forms of speech.

Teaching the Conventions of Language

As we listen, speak, read, and write, much of what we know about vocabulary, syntax, usage, spelling, punctuation, and even structure and organization is learned intuitively. Although frequent reading, writing, and oral activities help students develop a sense of the conventions of language use, those conventions not acquired through reading or writing can be taught directly so that they can learn necessary skills. For example, spelling unusual words or learning difficult usages such as subject-verb agreement when subject and verb are widely separated may require teaching and reinforcement. Older students who hear incorrect language on television or in the everyday speech of peers need direct instruction in diction and style if they are to master the finer points of expression necessary in the workplace or in their future education.

Eloquence of style and image and competence in language use demanded by the adult world are not usually the product of magic or osmosis. Mastering correctness in language usage sometimes requires the same kind of attention to detail as mastering the violin or executing a football play correctly.

For language to make sense and enable students to learn, teaching strategies must integrate instruction in verbal skills and the language arts rather than fragment and isolate conventions and mechanics from meaning. Activities, such as those in language experience approaches, that allow students to see in context how important good handwriting, spelling, form, and other conventions are in making their meaning clearer enable the students to succeed more quickly than would repetitive drills isolated from any useful purpose. Young children, for example, can learn to spell and handwrite their favorite words on the chalkboard, perhaps even to illustrate them, making words personal and meaningful from the start. Students cooperating in the production of a classroom newspaper learn more quickly about writing interesting leads for a headline article or punctuating sentences accurately than they would by filling in work-

Direct teaching of literature helps students move into, through, and beyond the literary work to a new understanding of themselves and the world around them.

book blanks or writing topic sentences or using semicolons. Students who dramatize or illustrate a new vocabulary word will remember its use and meaning more readily than those who encounter only a list of words out of context and a multiple-choice test item.

Use of Technology in English–Language Arts

English–language arts programs take on exciting new dimensions by integrating technology into the study of language and literature. Films or videotapes are used to introduce or enliven the study of plays and novels and stories; audiotapes, to improve students' speaking and listening skills; word processors, to help students organize and revise writing; and computer programs, to develop writing, reading, and thinking skills. Resource books, such as those in the *Technology in the Curriculum* series, offer teachers suggestions about integrating technology and English–language arts instruction in a world in which electronic media are as common to children as radio and comic books were to students of earlier generations.

Visual and Audio Media

Schools, school districts, and offices of county superintendents of schools, public libraries, public broadcasting stations, and teacher education and computer centers provide resources for films, videotapes, and audiotapes to introduce or supplement the study of literature, composition, and oral language. Even reluctant readers can be stimulated to read William Shakespeare's works by viewing Franco Zeffirelli's *Romeo and Juliet* or F. Scott Fitzgerald's works by seeing *The Great Gatsby*.

Students with limited-English proficiency or learning problems can overcome reading difficulties and understand good literature by hearing a story or poem read aloud as they listen to a good audiotape and follow the text. Audiotapes also provide an important resource for student and teacher response to writing, enabling teachers to respond to students more quickly and students to exchange responses to each other's writing.

Word Processors and Computers

Possibly more than any other invention in history, word processing simplifies the physical act of writing. Students with physical handicaps, poor handwriting skills, or coordination problems may for the first time feel freed from physical limitations to write more readily, producing written work that is longer, neater, more legible, and more substantive and fully developed. Students who have rebelled against the time-consuming and

tedious process of crossing out, drawing arrows, and recopying as they revise discover that the process of writing, from prewriting and fluency through revising and correctness, becomes more accessible.

Computer software can induce student writers to overcome the complaint, "I don't know what to write about." Elementary school students are helped to generate story ideas; middle grade students, to practice peer response to writing; and high school students, to write critically or review for exams.

Still other computer software programs lead students toward better understanding of important literary works by asking interactive questions and developing critical thinking skills through students' responses to reading. As software becomes more available and teachers provide guidance that takes software programs past the short-answer workbook stage into more important types of response, analysis, and thought, computers become important instructional tools to help students discover ideas and learn.

Multimodal Approaches to Teaching

Recent discoveries about learning have revealed that schools have often neglected young people whose dominant mode of learning is other than linear. Teachers, typically visually or aurally dominant, sometimes feel that students who gravitate toward elaborately designed journals or costumes or art presentations are wasting time when, in fact, such efforts are promoting more meaningful learning. Print-oriented adults may overlook the appeal generated by photographs or magazine pictures or the interest created by choral reading or dramatization of a literary passage.

English–language arts programs that offer a balance and variety of materials and approaches enable more students to become involved with the excitement of learning language. Visual learners, for example, respond readily to paintings, art objects, collages, signs, movies, or student-produced art. Auditory learners can develop an interest in reading and writing when they hear stories told aloud, participate in role-playing, reader's theater, or improvisations or use a tape recorder for oral brainstorming. Kinesthetic learners find the lesson easier to understand when they use models, illustrations, time-flow charts, flip books, costumes, food testing, or personally designed journals and poetry books.

Learning styles differ as greatly as personalities and are as individual as language. Effective English–language arts programs offer a range of strategies to engage all the aspects of learning and make language growth possible.

Curriculum for Students with Special Needs

The greatest challenge of teaching lies in reaching each of the individuals in a class in which needs, interests, talents, and backgrounds are so diverse. Less-prepared students, gifted students, limited-English-proficient students, special education students, and students who want to improve their speaking of standard English require an even broader repertoire of teaching strategies than might be the case if all students were the same. The fundamental issues remain constant: providing good literature; integrating instruction in all of the language arts; encouraging extended reading in students' own areas of interest; and connecting English–language arts activities and materials with the students' own lives. Students with special needs, however, demand of teachers some special adaptations of teaching methods.

Less-Prepared Students

Students who struggle with the processes of reading, writing, and oral language to such an extent that they lose the delight of the story or the importance of the meaning need extra help with understanding meaning. Especially important is the setting of a positive learning environment, a situation in which negative feelings such as fear, frustration, and

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embarrassment are absent and threats nonexistent.

The teacher and peers can help establish a positive climate for learning, by (1) drawing less-prepared students into activities; (2) respecting language and dialects that are linguistically different from standard English, such as black and regional dialects; and (3) creating situations in which all students' ideas and interests are important. In addition, teachers can help to develop in students a feeling of self-confidence and a sense that none of them is less than normal. They can do so by structuring group work so that students work cooperatively rather than lose their self-esteem by being isolated as "slow" and by planning activities to avoid impatient drilling or condescending textbooks and rote work.

Students who are low achievers or underachievers generally need more direct coaching and modeling about how to think through a problem before beginning to write, how to apply familiar strategies to new tasks, how to identify main ideas and recognize details, and how to see new ideas in realistic contexts. Providing background and asking questions related to their own experiences make understanding a text easier. Helping students to clarify and summarize what happens during reading and to separate the important from the trivial enables them to read more critically. A teacher who can suggest a model for how to find a main idea enables students to work through details until a main idea emerges.

The revision of writing, often a difficult task, becomes easier if peers can help students recognize where they need to supply more examples or where they need to rework awkward sentences. Students engaged in small-group discussions that allow them to sense that their ideas are valid and worth attention draw less-prepared students into situations in which they can learn to communicate as their language growth enables them to enjoy learning.

Gifted Students

Highly gifted students, intellectually ready for more challenging works and sophisticated ideas, also require special adaptations of teaching strategies to enable them to explore the rich resources of their minds through the experiences of reading, listening, writing, and speaking. Capable of reaching high-level abstractions quickly, they often need guidance to discover the logic and develop the support for writing about their ideas.

Already highly verbal and excited about ideas, gifted students may require discipline and focus in discussion as well as direction about listening tolerantly and thoughtfully to

others' opinions. Frequent opportunities for full-class and small-group discussions enable them to talk about, puzzle out, and refine their thinking. And peer response groups enable them to sharpen their writing, stretch their perceptions of audience, and break beyond ego-centered opinions. Often more curious than other students, gifted students seek out individual work and benefit from presenting their findings to a group or a class, the more creatively the better. Gifted students' busy, active minds require constant challenge and stimulation to avoid tuning out or becoming bored.

Limited-English-Proficient Students

One of the greatest challenges to English–language arts programs in California today is extending the crucial language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing to the increasing numbers of students in the schools for whom English is a second language. The direction provided in this framework is intended not only for English-speaking students but also for language-minority students, who must experience the same high-quality instruction, high expectations for student performance, and meaningful materials and activities as native speakers do if they are to participate in the fullest educational experience the schools can offer.

Most important to language acquisition is the fundamental principle governing all growth in language; that is, language learners need to understand the meaning of the message. Whether the students are toddlers or older students learning another language, the verbal message is aided by gestures, pictures, actions, and rewards. Communication is impeded (1) when the content is too abstract; (2) when the students do not know the vocabulary and syntax; and (3) when the lesson is delivered too rapidly. Frequent opportunities to read and speak and write and listen that are so important to all students learning language skills become even more important to students already fluent in one language and needing to learn another.

As we learn to read a first language by reading, we acquire a second language by picking up much unconsciously as we seek to understand meaning for our own needs and purposes. Certain teaching strategies can make the discovery of a new language and the delight of learning real possibilities for students. These strategies minimize the study of rules of grammar until speakers are proficient in the language, acknowledge students' already-learned competencies in one language and their talents and strengths as they acquire another, and capitalize on students' oral and thinking skills, whatever their language.

Limited-English-proficient students need a rich linguistic environment in which the use of repetitive skill-based work sheets and exercises is limited, and frequent opportunities are provided for students to speak, listen, read, and write in meaningful contexts.

Teaching students with no English-speaking background requires specialized approaches which ensure that students have experiences with meaningful content and acquire academic skills as they learn English as a second language. Students who are in the process of becoming proficient in English should be provided with concept development in all subject areas at a rate comparable to that of English-speaking students. Because concepts and skills learned in students' primary languages are not required to be relearned, one instructional alternative is to teach subject-area concepts by using the languages in which students are most proficient, with the understanding that English-only instruction should begin as soon as possible. Intermediate-English speakers also will need a modified curriculum based on (1) a strong initial literacy program; (2) strategies that will expand their English fluency; (3) the use of literary works with predictable story structures and language patterns (e.g., *Brown Bear, Brown Bear*) and repeated or cumulative story events; (4) frequent use of visuals; (5) a variety of questioning techniques; (6) structural vocabulary building; and (7) cooperative learning among themselves and with native-English speakers.

Limited-English-proficient students need a rich linguistic environment in which the use of repetitive skill-based work sheets and exercises is limited, and frequent opportunities are provided for students to speak, listen, read, and write in meaningful contexts. They need preliminary activities, such as vocabulary explanations and discussions about important ideas. Requiring them to say what they have heard, read what they have said (e.g., the teacher has written what they have said), and write what they have read develops understanding and fluency.

To enable students to talk about everyday items and to understand key concepts without knowing every word or structure, the teacher can use a variety of audiovisual aids and real objects to add meaning to the language associated with the lessons.

Recordings, pictures, films, videotapes, and objects like maps or utensils create a context to help students understand difficult concepts. Planning and organizing lessons so that important vocabulary and concepts are reviewed regularly helps the teacher to monitor students' progress and helps the students to express themselves correctly and clearly and fluently. Varying the level of questions, from factual to inferential, encourages students to produce language to communicate an idea important to them.

A key instructional strategy is to use cooperative learning groups. Working cooperatively with native and nonnative speakers of English increases students' opportunities to hear and produce language and to negotiate with others as they manipulate language and learning. Cooperative learning activities also develop students' self-esteem and friendship with students of other backgrounds, both important elements of language growth. Pairing limited-English-proficient students with native or fluent-English speakers helps the former to adjust to school and understand reading or language arts activities. For example, partners can share notes about presentations in the classroom or work together preparing a writing assignment or studying and answering questions.

Strong support systems that reinforce the acquisition of language are also critical in developing the English–language arts skills of limited-English-proficient students. Activities and assignments that recognize the importance of minority languages and cultures are essential to prevent alienation and inhibitions about language that prevent learning. Teachers who respect the efforts and talents of students struggling to learn a new language enable learners to relax and grow with confidence rather than feel confused or stultified. Opportunities to read lively materials, write about important issues and feelings, and talk and listen to native speakers of English along with new-language learners provide students with a rich linguistic environment and the potential for growth. Availability of library materials written in both English and students' native languages enables them to find recreational reading and to do research work appropriate to their level of proficiency.

Involving parents in providing support at home also enables students to develop their

language skills, whether those parent-supported activities are in English or another language. Parents need to understand that the quality of language used in interaction with children is more important to their children's success in school than the particular language used. Parents who read, talk, and listen extensively to their children, tell stories or discuss the news or school events, monitor television viewing time, and help their children meet school deadlines enable the children to overcome the difficult challenges of learning a new language. Students, whose classroom language activities are supported and reinforced in the home and community, will develop cognitively, become fluent language users, grow in self-confidence, and expand their horizons.

Special Education Students

It is important that English–language arts teachers work closely with special education staff serving students with disabilities and to discuss any necessary modification of the curriculum and to coordinate all instruction and services. Receiving copies of individualized education programs (IEPs) or attending meetings to develop IEPs, when necessary, can facilitate such coordination.

Adaptations which may be necessary to meet the unique needs of a visually impaired student include (1) specialized books and materials to be provided in large print, braille, or on tape; (2) a specialized listening skills program; (3) the development of basic concepts; and (4) a specialized study skills program.

In working with the hearing-impaired students, the English–language arts teacher may need to modify strategies and use media to accommodate special needs. The daily lesson plan should be reviewed with the special education teacher to determine where concepts and vocabulary may need clarification. The use of visual aids, such as slides, overhead projectors, captioned films, and tapes, provides further reinforcement for learning. In some instances the use of interpreters and notetakers may be required to support the student in the regular English–language arts program.

4. Exemplary Practices

Establishing revised curriculum standards and frameworks and reworking materials and textbooks are only the first important steps in improving English–language arts programs. Translating important principles into what happens between students and the teacher in the classroom clearly becomes the next important issue. To design and implement an integrated literature-based curriculum for all students, well-trained teachers, provided with the best of resources, must make dozens of important decisions about what happens daily in the classroom. The most effective learning environment is one in which the teacher and students expect that all students will become proficient in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in an atmosphere in which each student feels important and shares responsibility for the group.

Effective teaching of the language arts must include appropriate preparation and opportunities for participation and response. In studying a work of literature, for example, teachers must plan classroom activities to help students first to get into the work by reading a portion of the work aloud or playing a recording to evoke a desire to read. Second, the students will explore the work, understanding it by looking carefully at quotations or dealing with critical questions about central issues. And, finally, the students will go beyond the work to dramatize or illustrate it or in some other way connect it to their everyday lives. As they explore a work, students must also encounter strategies for thinking; that is, how to understand and how to compose, when to ask questions and how to answer them. The challenge of teaching, then, is planning classroom activities so that all students discover the way to learning for themselves.

Students who learn to work with each other in cooperative learning groups based on mutual interests and criteria other than ability develop their capacity to use language creatively and critically.

Independence and Cooperation in Learning

Imitating the paradoxical, dual nature of language itself, language arts instruction must (1) foster students' creative, critical, and independent use of language; and (2) enable students to communicate to others the best of what they have thought and understood. Classroom activities, then, must provide many opportunities for students to experience both independent and group work.

Perhaps for too long, teachers have felt guilty about allowing time for students to read and write quietly during the class period. Recent studies show that students have little time in school to read silently, even less time to write, and then only on low-level tasks such as copying or writing a short paragraph. Reports like *Becoming a Nation of Readers: The Report of the Commission on Reading*, however, recommend that students read independently as much as two hours a week in third or fourth grade. Similarly, students must write daily in journals, learning logs, letters, and other formats, to develop fluency and the habit of writing.

Students benefit from time devoted to planned independent reading and writing. They also benefit greatly from time structured for talking and listening and sharing and discussing what they think about a work of literature or a piece of writing. Students who learn to work with each other in cooperative learning groups based on mutual interests and criteria other than ability develop their capacity to use language creatively and critically. They also demonstrate higher academic performance, more positive attitudes toward school and learning, and better ethnic and cultural understandings and relations. Language is a social activity as well as a means of personal and individual discovery. To deny either possibility is to limit growth and learning.

Extended Instruction and Support

Students who read and write avidly come to see themselves as a community of readers and writers. Some find this community in the family: parents, guardians, siblings, or grandparents. Others rely on teachers and classmates. Ideally, an effective English-language arts program extends the community of readers and writers from the classroom to the home through homework that brings students, teachers, and parents together in pursuit of literacy.

Reading books of high literary quality becomes the first priority for homework. Students no longer write repetitive book reports, and parents no longer sign forms stating that students have read certain books. Family members become part of the process of sharing good books, and reading aloud again becomes a family activity. Beginning readers might, for example, read a favorite portion of a story aloud to family members who, in turn, read aloud the parts they like best. High school students might discuss reactions to a story or poem with family members or survey reactions to a novel and share the results of the survey with family or classmates.

Written homework should involve students in writing for enjoyment and sharpening their communication skills. Assignments, such as writing a script for a favorite television show or a letter to a local politician about a needed bicycle lane or a dialogue about a family household rule, offer students valuable opportunities. Students and families should be encouraged to discuss and share writing as it progresses.

Extending the teaching of the language arts to the home also involves fostering critical and creative language use through assignments that promote critical television viewing. Activities such as analyzing persuasive techniques on news programs, contrasting the "pitches" of commercials, and comparing plot and character development in different programs give students and family the chance to talk and write critically. Other assignments in which students use reading and writing in their daily lives might include reading menus or cookbooks, directions for games, or newspaper advertisements.

Whenever possible, homework assignments should extend beyond the classroom and involve the support of the home community in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. If parents or family are unwilling to participate, however, students should be encouraged to complete assignments independently without penalty. Whatever their age or home background or cultural heritage, children involved in effective English–language arts programs learn early that all the uses and forms of language—oral, read, written—are an integral and dynamic part of their daily lives.

Program for Kindergarten Through Grade Three

Morris Freedman has stated that "we cannot start too early the refinement of taste in children, their learning the fine gradations between right and wrong, their treasuring a sense of the past."[1] Bruno Bettelheim, Robert Coles, and others have shown us that even very young children have far greater aesthetic, moral, and philosophical capacities than most adults suspect. In fact, adults are sometimes surprised by the richly and subtly developed value systems of children, who, for example, are often better able to handle the grim realities of fairy tales than adults. Given the richness of children's developing values, reading must challenge their curiosity and engage their minds and spirit. They must not be unnecessarily sheltered from significant issues.

For students in kindergarten through grade three, the understanding of meaning is the first and most important reason for learning language and the primary focus of all language activities. Learning to read means learning to understand meaning from the first efforts to read. Learning to write means learning to compose from the first attempts at writing. These complex tasks are made even more difficult at the early stages, however, by the wide variations in readiness for both tasks among young children entering school. As a result, early language arts programs must provide for considerable flexibility in pacing and content of the language arts program.

Students in kindergarten through grade three should hear good literature read aloud daily to help them develop an ear for written language, enlarge their vocabulary, develop a common background of content, and build a love of reading and rapport with those who read. Teachers should model active and atten-

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[1] "An Early Start in the Humanities," *Education Week*, April 30, 1986, p. 24.

tive listening and praise students who demonstrate the same skills.

In the early grades students need many opportunities to express themselves, to speak and be heard. As a result, they will learn to speak confidently, listen respectfully and attentively to others, and know they will be heard in return. In listening to students, primary grade teachers can develop a positive repertoire of responses to reinforce children's use of language. For example, the teacher would comment on the student's "I runned fast" with "Yes, you ran fast. You ran very fast." Because good speaking also takes practice, students must experience in the early grades a variety of activities to expand their speaking repertoire, such as puppet theaters, "show and tell" times, and opportunities for telling stories about experiences or pictures.

Modern technology expands the techniques available to teachers. Thus, activities recorded on videotape can measure growth in vocabulary, intricacy of sentences or concepts, and language use. Frequent performances scheduled throughout the year enable students and teachers to focus assessment on accomplishments.

Most students in kindergarten through grade three fall somewhere between "emerging literacy" (rich in language background and ready to begin the study of language in reading and writing) and "extending literacy" (fluent in language and ready to use it to explore many avenues of learning and to study in many disciplines). Language arts programs in kindergarten through grade three must be integrated, purposeful, and constructive, and good books must be read silently or aloud by students and teacher. Using common words from the environment and from student-invented stories also helps students learn to read more easily because they understand the meaning before they read. Instruction in phonics during the early grades should help students understand the relationships between letters and sounds so that they can understand meaning.

Just as writing is a part of learning to read from the beginning, reading is a part of learning to write. Both skills require the ability to hear and use oral language. Students who read and listen to written work begin to emulate in writing the language they have read and heard. Early writing programs must introduce instruction in prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. And the conventions of spelling, handwriting, grammar, and punctuation should be taught as subskills to meet the individual student's needs and as aids to the written communication process.

Adults are sometimes surprised by the richly and subtly developed value systems of children, who, for example, are often better able to handle the grim realities of fairy tales than adults.

An Example of an Integrated Language Arts Lesson, Kindergarten Through Grade Three

The teacher reads aloud a fable, folktale, or fairy tale, preferably one with universal appeal and some connection to all students' backgrounds, such as Aesop's fable, "The Country Mouse and the Town Mouse." The fable ends with a choice of values that leads naturally to children's telling about the meaning of the story and how those choices relate to their own lives: "O my good sir, this fine mode of living may do for those who like it; but give me my barley bread in peace and security before the daintiest feast where Fear and Care are in waiting." Discussion of the story might include comparing the differences among students' lives and thinking about the advantages and disadvantages of different ways of living.

In accord with their stage of development, students discuss several of Aesop's fables and then read silently through others. As they share the stories they have read with other students and the teacher in small groups, they decide on some of the features common to all good fables. (For example, fables usually consist of stories in which the characters are animals who act like people, many colorful words are used, and a moral point or surprise ending is featured.) In pairs, small groups, individually, or as a class, students write their own tales, which may be posted on bulletin boards or made into illustrated storybooks.

Program for Grades Three Through Six

Beginning sometime between grades three and six, usually around age ten, students become especially interested in the world beyond their immediate environment. As at all levels, understanding meaning remains the greatest motivator for language learning. Background information brought in by students or teacher becomes especially important for language activities.

Reading activities must be significant and meaningful, integrating all the language arts of listening, speaking, reading, and writing as students build their language skills. At these grade levels the teaching of letter-sound relationships should have been completed. Classrooms filled with books as well as schedules allowing frequent visits to the school library are essential elements of a teaching plan that produces voracious readers who think, speak, and write about what they have read on a wide range of subjects.

Along with younger children, students in grades three through six also benefit from hearing literature read aloud daily. Choosing works with a reading level slightly above that of the students introduces them to new vocabulary and stretches their reading abilities. They are encouraged to listen attentively to expand their learning and read the book for themselves after it is read aloud.

Whatever the unit of study or activity, students at this level need many opportunities to formulate and share ideas with each other in small-group work and discussion. In addition, more formal opportunities to speak to the whole group enable students to learn to speak confidently, knowing that they will be heard and receive some response, and to listen actively and respond to others.

Because writing is integral to learning, students in grades three through six should write daily and should be encouraged to rethink, rearrange, and polish words. Practice writing should include some direct teaching of the strategies for good writing during the prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing stages. In addition, the conventions of usage, spelling, and punctuation should be taught in meaningful contexts. With the communication of meaning as their goal, students learn to assess their own writing by collecting it in portfolios for reviewing their progress and sharing with parents and teacher as the year passes.

An Example of an Integrated Language Arts Lesson, Grades Three Through Six

To begin an exploration of weather, students read or hear read aloud several episodes from stories dealing with weather, such as the story of a snowy day in Steven Kellogg's retelling of the Paul Bunyan tale or *The First Snow*,

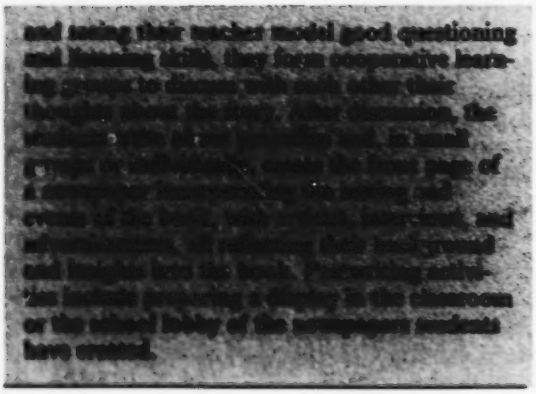
Program for Grades Six Through Nine

During the middle school grades, students are beginning to think more abstractly and can apply language skills with more sophistication as they develop a broader base of knowledge. At the same time, they are pulled in many directions emotionally and physically. Their school environment is quite changed from the secure elementary pattern. Although they want to be independent and to explore many interests and avenues toward future careers, they have continuing needs for stability and caring from adults. All these contradictory elements of growth must be addressed in planning programs for students in the sixth through ninth grades.

Teachers can continue reading aloud to students in grades six through nine, helping them to enjoy challenging literature that they are not yet ready to read on their own. Oral reading helps develop background information for the discussion of new ideas and helps students gain confidence in their communication skills. To support their developing verbal and social skills, students in grades six through nine need continuing opportunities to participate in and lead small-group discussions, join drama and speech groups, campaign for classroom and school offices, and join clubs or assume classroom roles that allow them to communicate orally and to speak before their peers.

A school library and a caring, qualified librarian are essential to motivating students in grades six through nine to read widely. Middle school students are especially fascinated by mystery or detective stories, by fantasies such as those of C.S. Lewis and Madeleine L'Engle, and by books like *Encyclopedia Brown*. Between the ages of ten and fifteen, students enter a critical period in which they develop the habit of reading for pleasure along with acquiring the study and research skills necessary for success in their subject areas.

As they become more independent, students in grades six through nine must also experience a wide range of purposes for writing in both informal and formal assignments. By writing journals and responses to literature and other subjects in reading logs, these students, in transition from childhood to adulthood, are able to sort through what they know and what they need to know. This time in their development of writing is also ideal for forming response groups for peer evaluation and revision of writing.



Program for Grades Nine Through Twelve

At the high school level, students continue to read and study in depth a core of important literary works as they participate in an extended personal reading and writing program supported by a large library system. Even at this age level, students enjoy getting into a classic like *Great Expectations* or *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by reading aloud or dramatizing lively scenes. As they learn about major social and political issues, they read and experience a variety of literary genre. At the same time all students are developing the capacity to write cogent, clear, precise prose, using their own styles and voices and to revise and edit for the conventions of writing, such as correct usage, punctuation, grammar, capitalization, and spelling.

Students practice and sharpen their listening and speaking skills in class discussions, panel presentations, and debates on worthwhile issues they are interested in exploring. They may sharpen their composing skills by preparing videotapes of literary scenes or other classroom presentations. All students should experience a variety of formal speech activities in speech classes and other classroom settings. The State Department of Education's publication, *Model Curriculum Standards: English–Language Arts, Grades Nine Through Twelve,* is a useful resource for planning and implementing an integrated language arts program at the high school level.

At the high school level, students must encounter significant reading and writing assignments in all the disciplines, with teachers in classes other than English also assuming the responsibility of helping students understand specific vocabulary, strategies, and structures necessary to reading in another discipline. Similarly, students learn study skills and research and reference techniques most effectively when those skills are integrated into the meaningful context of a particular class rather than studied in isolation.

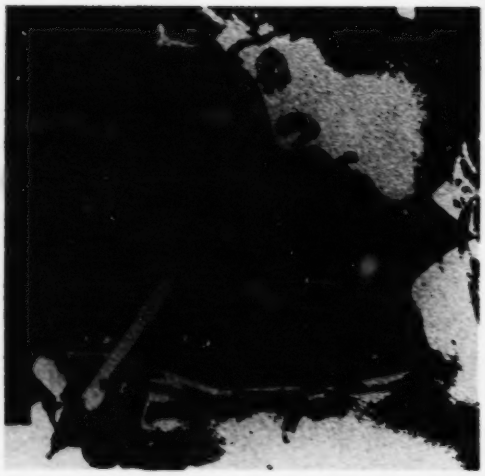
Teachers in all disciplines can also help high school students deal with the difficult

Teachers in all disciplines who offer students a wide variety of writing tasks and assignments will help students prepare for the writing required of them in the worlds of work and higher education.

processes of writing—prewriting, drafting, responding, revising, and editing—by framing assignments clearly, modeling writing, and allowing time for students to participate actively in all the stages of the writing process. Teachers in all disciplines who offer students a wide variety of writing tasks and assignments will help students prepare for the writing required of them in the worlds of work and higher education.

In summary, students should be provided a challenging curriculum with (1) a significant body of important literary works at the core; (2) teaching strategies that address the needs of all students and integrate all the elements of English-language arts instruction; and (3) support in the home and across all the school disciplines. With these elements in place, schools will graduate young people whose literacy enables them to respect themselves and others, succeed in the workplace, and contribute to improving the human condition. Surely, we can ask for no greater results for the study of English-language arts.

5. Evaluation of English–Language Arts Instruction



Classroom teachers have long understood the inadequacy of test scores for identifying all the dimensions of students' success in school. In fact, students have always been evaluated according to many criteria, and not all of the scores given to students reflect objective learning (for example, report cards that carry grades for citizenship, effort, or conduct). Perhaps the astonishing capacity of computers and the increasing tendency to reduce communications to numerical data have led the public and the media to place too much emphasis on test scores to evaluate the success of our schools and programs.

With the revised curriculum in place, assessment of its effectiveness must depend on tests that reflect the purposes of the curriculum. Teachers and others responsible for assessment will create tests based on significant works whose meanings have import for all students; tests will integrate all of the language arts by including significant reading and writing and reflecting the student's oral skills as well; and tests will focus on students' meaning, not on formalistic features such as plot and character. Good assessment practices will include informal daily activities in which students commend each other for their strengths, teachers create environments in which students can succeed, and parents support their children's progress as part of evaluation. Tests will be designed to help all students, and assessment will be structured to assess students' strengths and accomplishments, not simply weaknesses or failures. Good assessment also will provide direction for the teacher, identifying what students have learned and what progress they have made.

Obviously, the most useful information for assessing students' growth in English–language arts comes directly from students'

classroom encounters with literature and writing and with speaking and listening activities. Evaluation in English–language arts must include (1) frequent informal assessment of students' responses to their own and their classmates' speaking, reading, and writing; and (2) the teacher's more formal evaluations of students' participation and responses and of individual and class progress toward objectives identified in the curriculum. The end of assessment is an understanding whereby students demonstrate a broad in-depth acquaintance with literature; an ability to handle a variety of writing tasks with confidence, ease, and insight; a facility with aural and oral tasks; and a range of thinking skills from summary to analysis and interpretation.

Classroom Assessment

Although objective multiple-choice tests can provide broad indicators of students' performance and detailed analyses of particular skills, alternatives to objective testing provide more formative data. That is, they form, inform, and reform curricula and programs rather than fragment learning into isolated elements. Teachers, students, and parents are offered a more accurate picture of students' facility with English–language arts by using a variety of assessment strategies, such as the following:

- Classroom discussion of a literary work on a classwide or small-group basis provides much information about students' understanding of a work.
- Individual consultations between student and teacher while other students are, for example, doing silent reading or quiet group work offer the teacher insight about the individual student's understanding and problems.
- Carefully planned teacher-designed questions, to focus students' learning, or opportunities for students to learn to phrase questions for each other, require students to go beyond yes or no answers to the use of higher-order thinking processes.
- Student participation in activities such as choral or oral reading, reader's theater, or improvisational drama based on literature reveals their depth of understanding.
- Younger students' use of new vocabulary encountered in reading and older students' use of the vocabulary of literary analysis in discussion and writing demonstrate their growth in reading and writing.
- Students' abilities to read aloud unfamiliar but grade-appropriate materials or to explain plots and motivations of characters in an unfamiliar piece of fiction demonstrate their growth in reading skills more quickly, and often more accurately than formal test scores can.
- Audiotape or videotape recordings of students' oral reading, recorded several times a year, provide valuable diagnostic and reporting information for the teacher, students, and parents.
- Five-minute speeches on topics such as A Defense of Democracy provide information on the students' depth of understanding of social and political issues.
- Carefully devised essay tests require students to think about material and demonstrate some new understanding.
- Short papers prepared out of class offer students the time to reexamine and revise as they grapple with understanding their subjects and communicating their thoughts.
- Group-written responses to specific questions enable students to challenge and stretch their thinking about the material.
- The writing of new or original endings to a literary work calls on both the students' understanding of the work and their creativity.
- Assuming the role of a literary character who writes a letter to another character, an editor, or a governmental

Good assessment practices will include informal daily activities in which students commend each other for their strengths, teachers create environments in which students can succeed, and parents support their children's progress as part of evaluation.

leader reflects the students' insight into the character's values and motives.

- Rewriting a piece in a different genre (for example, rewriting a poem as a piece of fiction or a piece of fiction as a play) reflects understanding of meaning, tone, voice, and character.
- Teachers' use of a variety of scoring techniques for writing, such as holistic, primary trait, or analytical scores, offers students a wide range of information about writing skills.
- Students' extensive reading of books, magazines, and newspapers in leisure time indicates that reading is an activity of choice and pleasure.
- Students' interest in exploring new reading experiences, as indicated by teachers, parents, and librarians, suggests growth in learning through reading.
- Students' movement from formula books with predictable plots to more complex stories in their recreational reading indicates increased understanding and intellectual growth.
- Students' willingness to try different types of literature, moving comfortably among sports stories, biographies, myths, poetry, drama, and others, reflects confidence in approaching new reading tasks.

The complex nature of language acquisition and the multiple elements of language use in listening, speaking, reading, and writing underscore the need for assessment tools and experiences beyond the limits of objective tests. Although objective tests are clearly easier to administer, less expensive, or more quickly scored, they can measure only a small portion of what children have learned and understood. *Becoming a Nation of Readers* indicates that teaching and testing of reading subskills alone may interfere with students' understanding of the whole; similarly, in *Rhetorical Traditions and the Teaching of Writing*, Knoblauch and Brannon suggest the complexity of teaching writing:

> Those features of discourse which are most accessible to reliable measurement, the surface conventions, tend also to be the features having least to do with writers' true competence—their ability to make and connect substantial assertions, to penetrate a subject, to discover plausible lines of reasoning, to articulate imaginative insights, to think well in language.[1]

[1] C. H. Knoblauch and Lil Brannon, *Rhetorical Traditions and the Teaching of Writing*. Upper Montclair, N.J.: Boynton Cook Publishers, Inc., 1984.

Clearly, meaningful assessment of students' English–language arts skills and competence must make no distinction between the testing and the learning process and must enhance student motivation, that all-important key to success in the language arts.

School, Community, and State Assessment

Effective English–language arts programs include a wide range of assessment techniques to evaluate students' growth in understanding challenging literature, confronting important social issues and values in literature and their own lives, writing clear and lively prose, speaking thoughtfully and effectively, and listening critically, all of which enable students to participate fully in society. School districts may find useful the overview of students' skills and their use of language conventions provided by such objective instruments as criterion- and norm-referenced tests.

Beyond the classroom, school districts can also evaluate the effectiveness of English–language arts programs by examining a number of criteria other than scores on standardized tests. Among the indicators of effective programs are the following:

- Number, quality, and types of books students read
- Frequency of student writing on meaningful assignments
- Student-teacher ratio in classes in which writing instruction is emphasized
- Quality of homework assignments
- Extent to which student writing is published
- Awards that students win in language-related academic contests, such as decathlons and writing contests
- Extent of positive parent support and participation in language arts activities, such as reading programs, language fairs, and contests
- Satisfaction of businesses that employ graduates of the schools
- Qualifications of the English–language arts teaching staff
- Attitudes of students towards English–language arts
- Quality of libraries and other resources supporting English–language arts instruction

Assessment programs sponsored by the State Department of Education also emphasize a broad and meaningful assessment of students' understanding of reading, their mastery of writing and its conventions, and their use of the higher-order thinking skills. The direct writing assessment now under development by the Department's California Assessment Program will ask for student writing in a variety of types, reflective and autobiographical, critical and analytical.

The contents of this *English–Language Arts Framework*, along with the *Model Curriculum Standards: English–Language Arts, Grades Nine Through Twelve* and *English–Language Arts Model Curriculum Guide, Kindergarten Through Grade Eight*, describe English–language arts programs that encourage students to read widely and in depth, write often in many formats, study important writings from many disciplines, and relate these studies to their own lives in meaningful ways. Effective assessment must focus on identifying the extent to which programs have accomplished these goals.

6. Empowering Ourselves to Implement the Framework

From home to university, from factory to capitol dome, from school room to board room, improving the literacy of our society requires participation. Students, families, teachers, administrators, corporate executives, and legislators must all take part. And the resources of school and community, school districts and offices of county superintendents of schools, and state and legislative bodies must be committed to planning and implementing a coherent, lively program. Certain roles are so crucial as to demand particular attention.

Students and Families

Students today face choices and demands unparalleled in the experiences of most adults. Their need for stable values and appropriate models of adult behavior is often assaulted by the influences of unstable home situations, substance abuse and violence among their peers, and the rapid pace of technology. An effective English-language arts curriculum must address their needs, appeal to their interests, and capitalize on their energies as discoverers. The curriculum must become as active and vital as the world at large.

Parents and families, too, must invest in the growth of students' facility with the language arts by being willing to read to them, support and model the need for reading and writing, provide access to books for pleasure and learning, encourage selectivity in quantity and quality of television viewing, and create time in a hectic family schedule for reading and writing and talking about books and ideas.

Teachers

Teachers must see the act of teaching as a dynamic one that allows students to grow in language use through encounters with literature and human experiences. Piecework and fragmented work sheets isolating a single skill must give way to activities and assignments designed to involve the student in active thinking, responding, exploring, and shaping of ideas. Besides using a wide range of literary materials and teaching strategies, teachers must develop creative educational uses of media and technology that are so integral a part of the student's world and the workplace.

The role of teachers must be highlighted. The whole instructional edifice must be directed to making their complex jobs possible, more worthwhile, easier, more enlightened, and more satisfying while promoting the teachers' natural gifts, insights, and skills learned in the classroom.

Special Support Teachers

Reading specialists, resource teachers for students with educational or physical disabilities, and teachers of English for students whose first languages are other than English all have special knowledge and expertise to help students with special needs (1) succeed in the regular English–language arts curriculum and classrooms; (2) become fluent in English; and (3) prepare for the world beyond the school. These special support teachers provide continuity of instruction of the core language arts curriculum and disseminate to other teachers important information about research and strategies for ensuring the success of all students in English–language arts programs.

Department Chairs

Department chairs play a pivotal role in revising the English–language arts curriculum because their leadership as curriculum planners is closely related to the role of classroom teachers and students. With the direction of curriculum frameworks, district curricula and philosophy, and such aids as the *Model Curriculum Standards: English–Language Arts, Grades Nine Through Twelve*, the *English–Language Arts Curriculum Guide, Kindergarten Through Grade Eight*, and language arts handbooks, department chairs can provide leadership for teachers in planning courses. Included would be significant listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities. Other duties vital to the improvement of the English–language arts program are assigning classes appropriate to teachers' talents and training; providing meeting time for discussion of departmental goals and philosophy; and allocating departmental funds to provide meaningful text materials and media aids, supplementary classroom libraries, and professional resources.

Library Media Specialists

Good libraries in the classroom, school, and community must accompany improvements in the English–language arts curriculum. Opportunities for extended and recreational reading are central to the development of lifelong literacy and require access to good libraries staffed by dedicated library media specialists. Although paperback books available in a classroom, attractively presented, can entice readers, a friendly school or public librarian who helps students select books may turn children on to reading for life.

Every school must have its own collection of library media resources, including a variety of nonprint materials such as computer software, video cassettes, and audio cassettes. But just as important as the well-stocked and well-managed collection of books and nonprint materials is the librarian who encourages the use of these resources. As a part of the instructional team, librarians help teachers, administrators, and specialists select appropriate instructional materials. Librarians also teach students reference skills and guide

them in selecting books and other materials to broaden their horizons.

Principals

Vigorous leadership in curriculum and instruction produces effective schools. Principals set the climate for frequent and regular discussions of teaching and learning, allocate resources and time appropriately, coordinate curriculum, and oversee the coordination of district and state objectives, curriculum materials, assessment techniques, and classroom instruction. As the school's leader the principal communicates the priorities of the school to staff, parents, and students.

Effective principals also select and assign to English–language arts classrooms teachers whose talents and training support a strong program. Moreover, in keeping abreast of research in teaching English–language arts, principals involve their staffs in planning professional development activities to help them grow as professionals. The principal's role in recognizing and supporting English–language arts goals as central to the entire educational program is crucial.

School Board Members and District Administrators

School board members play a vital role in establishing excellence in a district's English–language arts program. First, they develop a philosophy that supports a literature-based, integrated program. Next, they become acquainted with the instructional content and teaching strategies for implementing such a program. Finally, they engage in long-range planning and budgeting of funds to provide the resources for personnel, curriculum development, in-service training programs, and instructional materials to implement and support the program.

Similarly, district administrators implement school district philosophies by involving district staff members in establishing district-wide English–language arts goals, articulating the language arts curriculum through the grades, allocating resources to language arts programs at the school sites, providing for appropriate assessment and evaluation of language arts goals, and informing parents and other citizens of accomplishments in English–language arts programs.

Offices of County Superintendents of Schools

Offices of county superintendents of schools provide centers for the exchange of information, leadership in in-service training programs for teachers of English–language arts, and coordination with the State Department of Education. As resource centers, these offices provide important library and media supplements to local and school libraries, and they act as centers for the upgrading of in-service teacher training and identification of exemplary programs. These offices also offer a network of information and assistance to school districts and schools in curriculum development, instructional planning, guidance and counseling, student testing, and evaluation of programs.

State Department of Education

The State Department of Education participates in programs to improve instruction and promote excellence in English–language arts in at least five areas: (1) implementing the State Board of Education's standards for high school graduation; (2) upgrading instruction through the California Assessment Program; (3) publishing documents such as the *Handbook for Planning an Effective Writing Program; Handbook for Planning an Effective Literature Program; Recommended Readings in Literature: Kindergarten Through Grade Eight;* the *Model Curriculum Standards: English–Language Arts, Grades Nine Through Twelve,* and *English–Language Arts Model Curriculum Guide: Kindergarten Through Grade Eight;* (4) training teachers

and administrators in the use of these documents; and (5) implementing the State Board of Education's textbook and instructional materials adoptions, which incorporate the tenets of this framework.

Preservice and In-service Trainers

The art of teaching and a knowledge of the content of the discipline become central in upgrading students' experiences with a literature-based curriculum emphasizing the integration of the language arts. As all learners do, teachers imitate their teachers. Clearly, teacher preparation programs must provide instruction by professors whose teaching models good teaching practices and who are knowledgeable in the discipline of English–language arts. Courses in literature, child psychology, classroom management, and methods of teaching effectively must focus on both content and good teaching.

Prospective teachers should become acquainted with the classroom early in a variety of ways. Newer professional trainees might observe or assist individual students at varying grade levels, and the more advanced undergraduates might teach small groups or the entire class under the teacher's guidance. A variety of experiences will acquaint teacher trainees with the full spectrum of developmental learning before they enter the classroom as teachers and enable them to see themselves as classroom researchers and learners from the beginning of their professional lives.

For the practicing teacher in-service training programs in continuing professional growth are as necessary to replenishing the teaching art as breathing in is to breathing out. Time and support must be provided for meeting with other teachers to read and discuss works, share teaching ideas, and keep up on developments in the teaching of English–language arts. These sessions must be easily accessible to teachers. They may be held on the school site during the regular day or away from school. They may also include participating in conferences, in state programs such as the California Writing Project or the California Literature Project, and other professional meetings. Having access to libraries and opportunities for meeting with other teachers, from elementary through university levels and from across the state, are also important elements of broadening teachers' perspectives and keeping them abreast of research and developments.

Commercial Publishers

The best teachers, with all the district and administrative and home support possible, can only improve students' literacy when the material they work with offers challenging and substantive content. Good books—outstanding short stories, complete novels, collections of poems and plays, children's classics, articles from history, and important speeches—are the proper foundations on which to construct listening, speaking, reading, and writing tasks. Publishers become an important part of the effort to improve literacy when they provide attractive trade books full of significant ideas and when their textbooks include teaching suggestions to tie reading to students' experiences, challenge students to emulate the writer's style and creativity, and provide background that enriches the students' knowledge and appreciation of the work. A well-developed series helps teachers and students to relate one work to another and encourages students to discover how even an ancient classic touches the human experiences and emotions of modern life.

Materials that focus on understanding the meaning of literature and activities that integrate the functions of language—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—enable the teacher to provide the necessary direct instruction in literature. Students are thereby helped to get into the work with a desire to read, explore the work to understand it, and go beyond the work to its meaning in their own lives.

Appendix A

Textbook and Instructional Materials Standards for Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing, Kindergarten Through Grade Eight

Importance of Textbooks

Research indicates that teachers in elementary school classrooms use more than 90 percent of their reading instruction time for basal reading programs; therefore, the contents of textbooks and related instructional materials are crucial. Basal textbook programs strongly influence what teachers teach, what they do and say when they teach, and what students use when they practice their language arts.

Importance of Literature

Literature is at the core of the program. Textbooks must be content driven, because content is the vehicle that drives language learning. Basal textbooks do not constitute the entire curriculum; however, they should include, with literature, expository materials from other fields of knowledge. One does not read reading or write writing, but one does read and write about something, either through literature, science, history, or personal thoughts and experiences. A quality program will include a variety and balance of content.

Integrated Instruction

The materials should present the integrated whole of language learning, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing with the supporting skills of grammar, spelling, and handwriting. The program should provide many activities that stimulate the development of critical thinking skills in both the comprehending and composing processes of oral and written language. Supporting skills and subskills should not be fragmented, taught in isolation, nor become the ends of teaching, but rather they should be taught to assist students in learning about the power of language and how to develop their own power through the use of language.

Alignment

All of the elements, such as the students' texts and teachers' manuals, must be aligned toward implementing a program that is integrated, purposeful, and constructive. Consequently, the objectives of each lesson, the teaching strategies, the teacher/student interaction, the independent activities, and the evaluation must have the same focus. Because the teacher is recognized as the orchestrator of instruction, the materials used must allow for creativity and flexibility.

Standards for the Total Program

These standards apply to all components—students' texts, students' study materials, and the teachers' manuals—with special emphasis given to the inclusion of high-quality literary selections in the students' texts and the instructional integration of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

1. Content

a. Course work

Materials will contain a balance of fiction and nonfiction selections that engage students in:

- Classical and contemporary works of literary merit that exemplify the best use of language
- Significant themes that broaden students' awareness of their own and others' societies
- Our rich and diverse literary heritage, which connects students to political, social, and ethical issues central to our society
- Works in which students encounter values such as truth, justice, and compassion through interesting stories and memorable characters
- The most powerful examples of major literary forms (e.g., essays, speeches, poetry, and drama)
- A variety of expository writing, including pieces from all subject areas and practical applications, introduced in the early grades and expanded in grades three and above
- Works that stimulate active response and provide enjoyment
- Works that stimulate an interest in language in both the receptive and expressive forms

b. Extensions

The program will provide for extended reading experiences—reading beyond the text—by:

- Developing a personal reading program for each student
- Demonstrating the importance of reading in today's society
- Providing the opportunities for research, using source materials such as encyclopedias, magazines, and library books
- Encouraging the reading of tradebooks and other materials for personal pleasure and sharing with others
- Modeling listening, speaking, reading, and writing by presenting selections and illustrations that portray participants in a variety of realistic situations

2. Comprehension

The program will focus on comprehension and composition in all language activities, including:

- Listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary building, decoding, handwriting, spelling, and grammar
- Linking personal experiences and prior knowledge of content with language instruction, including opportunities for building common background experiences
- Extending experiences into research activities, using source materials in the library and home-study strategies
- Stimulating the development of higher-level thinking, such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation through activities that extend content and meaning
- Encouraging students to manipulate words, sentences, paragraphs, and connected discourse

3. Content and Style

Materials will be well written, demonstrating the following characteristics:

- Importance placed on content, meaning, and interest rather than on a precise readability level
- Adequate length to ensure continuous, unfragmented discourse and a natural flow of language
- Sophistication of style and tone appropriate to the student's level

- Clarity of purpose and comprehensible structure made clear through the use of language, structure (logical order), and format (e.g., boxes, stylized fonts, subheads, highlights, color, and spacing)
- Continuity and consistency in method of presentation
- Recurring literary themes

4. Language Development

The program will emphasize the total language experience by offering techniques and activities for interrelating listening, speaking, reading, and writing with thinking—before, during, and after focused instruction. The program will provide for:

- Varied instructional approaches to teach students of different developmental levels, learning styles, and ages
- Adjusting and adapting the instructional approach to the needs of students who speak a primary language other than English

5. Decoding

Reading instruction includes many decoding strategies, such as:

- A systematic phonics program taught in the early grades, using meaningful context
- The use of context clues
- The relationship between meaning and the structural analysis of words as an aid to spelling
- Techniques that include rhyme, rhythm, and substitutions
- Practice to achieve the appropriate level of speed and the fluency as called for in each situation

6. Vocabulary Development

This program will emphasize extensive reading and language usage, including:

- Understanding and interrelating new concepts and words before, during, and after listening, speaking, reading, and writing
- Encountering and using vocabulary in multiple contexts over an extended period of time
- Participating in meaningful and interesting word study that includes, for example, etymology, semantic similarities and differences, and syntactic and multiple meanings
- Encouraging the acquisition of a personal, *active* vocabulary (One method, for example, would be to keep a small notebook to record new words learned in various contexts.)

7. Evaluation

The evaluation and assessment component of the program will provide methods for:

- Using assessment results to assign instructionally appropriate texts to individual students
- Diagnosing specific strengths and needs
- Assessing the application of skills and strategies to a variety of listening, speaking, reading, and writing contexts
- Assessing the reading process in its separate facets (such as decoding, comprehension, and vocabulary development) and evaluating the reading process holistically (such as summarizing and responding to literature)
- Assessing listening, speaking, reading, and writing in separate facets that are appropriate to each process and evaluating each aspect of language arts comprehensively
- Evaluating students' abilities to monitor and adapt their reading strategies depending on the purpose and content
- Evaluating fluency of silent and oral reading for a variety of purposes
- Allowing continuous assessment of progress
- Correlating test items to content in students' texts and lessons in the teacher's manual
- Offering positive reinforcement of each student's progress
- Identifying attitudes and interests

8. Technological Applications

The program will provide appropriate applications of technology, including:

- Technology that supports the teaching of listening, speaking, reading, and writing
- Techniques for critical assessment of media
- Information retrieval and enrichment, using multimedia resources

9. Spelling, Handwriting, Grammar, and Punctuation

Spelling, handwriting, grammar, and punctuation are subskills to writing and should not be taught as ends in themselves, but rather as means to helping students become competent, fluent users of language. Exercises and activities for teaching these skills may be part of the students' texts to be used as needed in the integrated program, or they may be bound separately. However, they must be aligned with the total program.

Spelling, handwriting, grammar, and punctuation are subskills to writing and should not be taught as ends in themselves.

Students' Study Materials

The students' study materials will meet the preceding standards whether they are packaged as an integrated single text, single text with a literature collection, workbook, software, or multiple texts with an integrated manual. Workbooks and/or copy masters, when included, must be carefully coordinated with the students' texts and the teacher's manual. The workbooks must be designed to provide practice that focuses on meaning in the context of comprehension and composition. They may include:

- Writing activities that require the development of complete compositions
- Creative and thoughtful extension of concepts and skills beyond one-word responses
- Extensive practice with more difficult skills being introduced, while providing for individual differences
- Ongoing reinforcement and application of knowledge and skills that stimulate a high level of thinking

Software, in order to be included, must meet, in addition to those standards discussed previously, the following standards:

- Software must be an integral part of the entire instructional package; it must be necessary to and enhance the other modes of presentation and instruction.
- Software must tap the computer's full capabilities as an effective teaching and learning device. The technology must promote active engagement on the part of the student.
- Software must meet, at a minimum, the "Desirable Attributes of Educational Software" as found in *Guidelines for Educational Software in California Schools.*[1]

Teacher's Manual

The teacher's manual will be coordinated with the students' texts and study materials. This manual will address all of the standards listed previously and provide guidance to the teacher who must orchestrate an integrated program that includes:

- Demonstrated consistency between the philosophy and research base used to develop the program
- Strategies that integrate the language arts with emphasis on comprehension and composition
- Reflection of a consistent model of effective teaching
- Suggested activities that develop common background knowledge (e.g., research, field trips, interviews, and homework)

[1] *Guidelines for Educational Software in California Schools.* Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1985.

- An emphasis on teaching rather than on testing
- Skill activities that are directly related to the content of the student's texts
- Emphasis on raising comprehension levels and suggestions for questioning strategies that result in higher levels of thinking
- Explicit recommendations for teaching comprehension elements, such as integrating what is known with information in the text, acquiring knowledge about text structure, and monitoring progress of encoding, inference, and retrieval procedures
- Strategies that lead to increasing the student's responsibility for and independence in applying knowledge and skills
- Strategies for meeting the needs of students with limited-English proficiency and those with different learning styles and abilities
- Foundation activities for limited-English-proficient students and other students with special needs, emphasizing oral language, vocabulary development, graphic stimulation, and other effective techniques
- Suggestions for transition of limited-English-proficient students into the basal reader
- Recommended resources and additional literature
- Techniques for evaluating students' progress that do not distort the integrated nature of the learning process. Some of these techniques will include measurement of the quantity of students' products with a focus on the holistic and integrated nature of those products. For example, teachers:
  - Evaluate students' direct responses.
  - Ask students to retell material read.
  - Match readers with materials using procedures such as cloze.
  - Assess samples of writing through portfolio collections.
  - Encourage self-assessments and peer assessments.
  - Use standardized, objective, criterion-referenced, and matrix sampling tests.

In addition, the teacher's manual should:

- Relate other content areas to language arts and language arts to other content areas.
- Describe strategies good readers and writers use that teachers can model as well as teach directly.
- Help teachers to extend student activity beyond the classroom.
- Suggest ways teachers can revitalize themselves (e.g., join professionals' book clubs).
- Have several schedules and options for using materials:
  - With various ability levels
  - With various time allotments
  - With core, extended, and recreational reading tied to writing and speaking tests
- Help teachers cope with demanding paper loads by:
  - Incorporating "enabling techniques," showing models of fitting response to students' works (Such responses are not error based; they should be constructive and concerned with meaning first.)
  - Suggesting ways students help each other
  - Helping them with advice as to how to make collaborative learning work, for this makes students become responsible for their own learning

Supplementary Materials

1. Spelling

The spelling program must be based on current research. Also it must be integrated with the total language program so that spelling is taught in a reading and writing context. The program should allow for the meaningful use of the most commonly used words. To be based on research, the program must provide for:

- Developmental levels of understanding from letter sound regularity to patterns, to meaning-based units
- Self-corrected pretests and instruction on words selected from students' compositions
- In kindergarten through grade three, instruction designed to parallel student development from invented spellings, to experimentation with rules and patterns, to more sophisticated knowledge of spelling
- In grades three through six, emphasis on comparing words, discovering spelling patterns and relationships between spelling and meaning, and the use of semantic and structural analogy strategies
- In grades six through nine, emphasis on building a lexical base
- Elimination of practices that are found to be ineffective, such as teaching an extensive list of rules and exceptions, assigning work sheets on unknown words, or assigning isolated dictionary exercises

2. **Handwriting**

   Handwriting is taught in the early grades. It must be based on research, providing for the initial presentation of manuscript letter formation that leads to cursive letter formation on an individual developmental basis. Practice must be given through writing for meaning. Self-assessment should be included.

3. **Grammar**

   Standard language usage will be presented as a part of the entire program of instruction in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Punctuation, capitalization, and sentence and paragraph construction will be presented as needed to aid the communication process.

4. **Dictionaries**

   The grade level at which dictionary skills are introduced is a local district decision. However, practice in using dictionaries should begin in the early grades as an integral part of language learning. As language facility and especially reading and writing abilities increase, skill in using a dictionary can also increase through continuing instruction on how to:

   - Locate words efficiently.
   - Check spellings.
   - Read dictionary entries.
   - Translate the many symbols and abbreviations.
   - Identify appropriate definitions.
   - Use the dictionary as a resource, including supplementary sections.

   Classrooms should have a variety of dictionaries so that students not only learn how to use different dictionaries but also learn how dictionaries differ in:

   - Scope of the vocabulary
   - Format of the entries
   - Content of the entries
   - Order of definitions within each entry (e.g., frequency of use or historical order)
   - Diacritical markings

Appendix B
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